

Message Text

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FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 049889 ACTION PHNOM PENH INFO TOKYO
MANILA BANGKOK SINGAPORE KUALA LUMPUR JAKARTA CANBERRA WELLINGTON
SAIGON MOSCOW LONDON DTD 05 MAR

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, CB

SUBJECT: MARCH 5 BRIEFING BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY HABIB

REF: STATE 049074

FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF THE ON-THE-RECORD MEETING
WITH THE PRESS BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
PHILIP C. HABIB, MARCH 5, 1975.

OPENING STATEMENT: AS MANY OF YOU KNOW, THERE HAS BEEN
A GOOD DEAL OF COMMENT ABOUT THE PROSPECTS, OR THE
LACK OF PROSPECTS, FOR A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT IN
CAMBODIA; AND IN RESPONSE TO A GOOD MANY STATEMENTS
THAT WERE BEING MADE -- SOME ACCURATE, SOME INACCURATE --
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ABOUT THE EFFORTS THAT HAVE BEEN MADE TO SEEK A

PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT FOR THE CONFLICT IN CAMBODIA, IT HAS BEEN DECIDED TO ISSUE THE SUMMARY AND THE OUTLINE OF THOSE EFFORTS MADE OVER THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS TO BRING ABOUT AN EARLY COMPROMISE SETTLEMENT IN CAMBODIA.

THE RECORD IS, OF COURSE, IN OUTLINE FORM. IT DOES NOT MENTION SPECIFIC DETAILS EITHER IN TERMS OF PERSONALITIES OR COUNTRIES. AND AS MOST OF YOU KNOW, THAT ISN'T BY ACCIDENT; IT IS OBVIOUSLY DELIBERATELY DONE THAT WAY AND

FOR QUITE OBVIOUS REASONS THAT I DON'T NEED TO EXPLAIN.

BUT WHAT THE RECORD DOES ATTEMPT TO PRESENT IS SOME KIND OF A PICTURE OF A CONCERTED, SUSTAINED, CONTINUAL EFFORT TO BRING A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF A WAR WHICH HAS GONE ON TOO LONG. THE WAR IN CAMBODIA DOES NOT CONTINUE BY ANY LACK OF EFFORT TO BRING IT TO AN END ON EITHER OUR PART OR ON THE PART OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE KHMER REPUBLIC. IF THERE IS ANY LESSON THAT ONE LEARNS FROM A QUICK PERUSAL OF THIS OUTLINE, IT IS THAT NOT ONLY HAS THERE BEEN A SUSTAINED EFFORT IN THE PAST BUT THAT IT WOULD BE HOPED THAT AT SOME TIME, IN SOME WAY, AS THAT EFFORT IS CONTINUED, THERE WILL BE FOUND THE MEANS TO BRING ABOUT THAT EARLY COMPROMISE SETTLEMENT WHICH BOTH THE GOVERNMENT OF THE KHMER REPUBLIC AND THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT HAVE SOUGHT ASSIDUOUSLY.

WITH THAT INTRODUCTION, I'LL TAKE ANY QUESTIONS, IF I MAY.

YES.

Q MR. HABIB, YOU TALK ABOUT A SUSTAINED AND CONTINUAL EFFORT. THE RECORD GIVEN SHOWS THAT ONE EFFORT WAS ABORTED, OR THWARTED, IN AUGUST OF 1973, AND THEN NOTHING HAPPENED UNTIL OCTOBER 1974 -- WHICH IS 14 MONTHS. SO IN EFFORTS THAT BEGAN IN '73, OR IN JUST A LITTLE BIT MORE THAN TWO YEARS AGO, YOU'VE GOT A 14-MONTH GAP.

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A THAT ISN'T QUITE COMPLETE IN THE SENSE THAT THIS DOESN'T INTEND TO COVER EVERY CONVERSATION OR EVERY OCCASION WHEN THE SUBJECT WOULD HAVE BEEN MENTIONED. IT INTENDS TO HIGHLIGHT THOSE SIGNIFICANT MOMENTS IN DIALOGUES AS THEY MAY HAVE OCCURRED.

IN BETWEEN THERE WERE OTHER OCCASIONS AT WHICH MEETINGS

OR DISCUSSIONS WERE BEING HELD -- AT WHICH THE SUBJECT WOULD COME UP. BUT THE SPARTICULARLY -- I WOULDN'T SAY ALL PROMISING -- BUT THE PARTICULARLY SIGNIFICANT MOMENTS IN THOSE ATTEMPTS APPEAR IN THIS OUTLINE.

Q MR. SECRETARY --

Q MR. AMBASSADOR --

A YES

Q -- IN ONE OR TWO PLACES YOU RECITE VARIOUS OF THESE CONTACTS WHERE YOU DISCUSS THE ELEMENTS OF A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT.

A. YES.

Q WOULD YOU SHARE WITH US WHAT SOME OF THOSE ELEMENTS MIGHT BE?

A THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT THE LAST THREE POINTS LAID OUT IN THE PAPER ARE DESIGNED TO ANSWER. AND I WOULD SUGGEST THAT EXPERTS, SUCH AS YOURSELVES, IN PARSING DIPLOMATIC VERBIAGE, WOULD BE ABLE TO FIGURE OUT JUST WHAT THAT ALL MEANS.

Q. MR. AMBASSADOR --

A THE FACT IS: THOSE ARE THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES THAT GUIDED US IN THESE DISCUSSIONS.

Q WHO ARE THE PARTIES --

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A WE'LL TAKE THEM ONE AT A TIME. I'M PREPARED TO TRY TO GET EVERYBODY.

SPENCER?

Q CAN YOU TELL US WHO THE PARTIES ARE?

A NO, I CAN NOT. AS I SAID EARLIER -- NOW, LET ME EXPLAIN WHY. I THOUGHT YOU UNDERSTOOD WHY, BUT IT'S QUITE OBVIOUS THAT YOU WANT ME TO SAY WHY. (LAUGHTER).

I SAID EARLIER THAT IT'S THE HOPE OF THE UNITED STATES -- AND I BELIEVE THAT IT IS THE HOPE, AND I KNOW THAT IT IS THE HOPE, OF THE KHMER GOVERNMENT -- THAT IN SOME WAY, AT SOME TIME, IT WILL BE POSSIBLE

TO ACHIEVE THAT KIND OF NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT WE'VE
SO ASSIDUOUSLY SOUGHT.

NOW, IN ORDER TO DO THAT, ONE DOES NOT WISH TO CLOSE
OUT CHANNELS. ONE DOES NOT WISH TO ENTER INTO
SUCH DETAILS AT THIS MOMENT THAT WOULD IN ANY WAY
DETRACT FROM THE POSSIBILITY IN THE FUTURE
THAT SHOULD BE ABLE TO ACHIEVE YOUR OBJECTIVE.

NOW THEN, WHY PUT IT OUT? WELL, THE ANSWER IS
QUITE OBVIOUS -- THAT IN ORDER TO PUT OUT WHAT WE
DID PUT OUT, WE WENT FURTHER THAN ONE NORMALLY
GOES, BECAUSE THERE IS A NEED TO KNOW.
AFTER ALL, THE ADMINISTRATION IS SEEKING THE SUPPORT
OF CONGRESS FOR ITS ACTIONS. IT'S SEEKING THE SUPPORT
OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE FOR ITS ACTIONS. THE
ADMINISTRATION ALSO HAS SOME RESPONSIBILITY TO
ACCOUNT FOR ITS ACTIONS -- TO YOU AND TO THE PUBLIC.
AND IT WAS DECIDED THE BEST WAY TO DO IT WAS BY
PUTTING OUT THIS OUTLINE.
IT WAS EQUALLY DECIDED THAT IT WAS NOT THE BEST
WAY, IN TERMS OF THE BASIC OBJECTIVES THAT WE HAVE IN
MIND -- THE PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT -- TO SPECIFY OR TO
GIVE UNDUE DETAIL, WHICH COULD -- IN ONE WAY OR
ANOTHER -- DETRACT FROM ANY FURTHER EFFORT.

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THAT'S ABOUT AS HONEST AS I CAN BE, SPENCER, TO
ANSWER THAT QUESTION.

YES, SIR.

Q MR HABIB, IN 1973, YOU SAY THAT A PROMISING
EFFORT WAS ABORTED BY CONGRESSIONAL LEGISLATION
BANNING THE BOMBING. THAT'S PRETTY SERIOUS CHARGE
JUST TO HANG OUT THERE. IS THERE SOMETHING YOU CAN
TELL US IN THE WAY OF DETAIL ABOUT WHAT THE
APPROACH WAS OR WHAT YOU WERE APPROACHING --
HOW NEAR YOU WERE, WHAT THE ELEMENTS OF THAT
PARTICULAR SETTLEMENT APPEARED TO HAVE IN MIND?

A OF COURSE, IF DOESN'T HANG OUT THERE. IT SITS
THERE IN ALL SOLID SPLENDOR. (LAUGHTER).

THERE WERE A SERIES OF VERY SIGNIFICANT AND SERIOUS
CONTACTS IN THAT PERIOD. AND, AGAIN, I REALIZE
IT'S NOT SATISFACTORY TO NEWSMEN WHO SEEK THE NEWS.
I MUST BEG OF YOU TO BEAR WITH ME IF I DO NOT IDENTIFY
EXACTLY HOW AND WHERE. BUT THERE WERE A SERIES OF

CONTACTS WHICH, AS WE DESCRIBED THEM, WERE EXTREMELY PROMISING. THESE TALKS, THESE CONTACTS, APPEARED TO BE REACHING WHAT WE CHARACTERIZE AS A SERIOUS STAGE.

THERE'S NO QUESTION BUT THAT ONE COULD ARGUE THAT THERE WAS A DEGREE OF CLARIFICATION OF ISSUES AND THE MANNERS IN WHICH THEY COULD BE DEALT WITH.

WHEN THE BOMBING HALT WAS VOTED, THESE PROMISING DISCUSSIONS ENDED. IT IS NOT SURPRISING, AND IT WOULD NOT BE SURPRISING TO YOU, TO KNOW, AFTER ALL, THAT ONE OF THE FACTORS THAT WAS UNDER DISCUSSION AT THAT TIME WAS THE BOMBING HALT. WHEN IT WAS ENDED, TAKEN AWAY FROM THE PACKAGE -- IF YOU WANT TO CALL IT, WHEN ONE DISCUSSES THESE THINGS IN TERMS OF "PACKAGES" -- A VERY SIGNIFICANT ELEMENT NO LONGER BECAME A SIGNIFICANT FACTOR IN THE NEGOTIATIONS.

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IT IS A FACT THAT WHEN THAT HAPPENED, THAT CHANNEL ENDED -- WAS CUT OFF.

NOW, THERE'S NO CONCLUSION TO DRAW, EXCEPT THE CONCLUSION THAT THE OTHER SIDE DECIDED THAT IT DIDN'T HAVE TO PURSUE THE PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT THAT WAS BEING PURSUED AT THAT MOMENT.

Q MR. HABIB, WHY ARE YOU PREPARED TO GIVE US YOUR EXPLANATIONS AND VOLUNTEER WHAT YOU JUST TOLD US WHEN IT BUTTRESSES YOUR CASE, BUT YOU'RE NOT PREPARED TO GIVE US DETAILS IN RESPONSE TO OUR QUESTIONS FOR SPECIFICS?

A ASK ME A QUESTION THAT DOESN'T BUTTRESS MY CASE AND I'LL ANSWER IT.

Q. THE SPECIFICS ON WHAT WAS THWARTED AT THAT TIME.

A I TOLD YOU. A SERIES OF SERIOUS DISCUSSIONS WHICH APPEARED TO BE VERY PROMISING WITH REGARD TO ACHIEVING A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT.

NOW, ISN'T THAT SPECIFIC ENOUGH?

Q NO. NOT IN THE SENSE OF THERE BEING DETAILS AS TO WHOM THESE DISCUSSIONS WERE WITH.

A AT THE OUTSET, I HAVE DESCRIBED THE FACT THAT

I AM NOT GOING TO REVEAL WHO THEY ARE. NOW YOU CAN DRAG ME AND CHEW ME AND THROW ME ON THE FLOOR AND KICK ME -- YOU CAN DO WHAT YOU WANT -- (LAUGHTER) -- BUT, LET'S FACE IT: THERE IS A VERY GOOD REASON -- WHICH I TRIED TO EXPLAIN -- IN THE KIND OF TERMS THAT I EXPECT YOU TO UNDERSTAND, IF NOT ACCEPT. I SAID I EXPECT YOU TO UNDERSTAND THEM -- IF NOT ACCEPT THEM.

Q PHIL --

A YES.

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Q -- LET ME BE SPECIFIC HERE.

A BE AS SPECIFIC AS YOU WANT -- IN YOUR QUESTIONS.

A O.K. (LAUGHTER.)

WHEN THE BOMBING WAS HALTED BY LAW, AUGUST 15, PRESIDENT NIXON MADE A PUBLIC STATEMENT SIMILAR TO THE ONE THAT WAS MADE -- THAT IS BEING MADE RIGHT HERE -- THAT IS --

A YES. HE MADE IT BOTH BEFORE AND AFTER.

Q THAT'S CORRECT.

A YOU RECALL IN HIS VETO MESSAGE --

Q I DIDN'T ASK MY QUESTION YET.

A GO AHEAD. I'M SORRY. I JUST WANTED TO GET THE RECORD STRAIGHT.

Q YOU MADE THE STATEMENT THAT A VERY SENIOR OFFICIAL, KNOWN TO ALL AS A VERY SENIOR OFFICIAL AT THAT TIME, BRIEFED THE NEWSMEN ON A BACKGROUND BASIS, SAYING THAT THESE NEGOTIATIONS WERE WITH THE OTHER MAJOR CAPITALS OF THE WORLD. LATER THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR TO CAMBODIA -- EMORY SWANK AT THAT TIME -- GAVE A PUBLIC INTERVIEW AND WAS SPECIFICALLY ASKED ABOUT THE SUBSTANCE OF THESE NEGOTIATIONS AND RESPONDED THAT, AS I REMEMBER IT, THERE WERE CONTACTS WITH THE OTHER MAJOR SUPERPOWERS ON THIS; BUT HE WOULD NOT DESCRIBE THEM AS "NEGOTIATIONS." THEY WERE "NORMAL DIPLOMATIC TALKS," HE SAID. THAT'S HOW HE DESCRIBED IT.

A WELL, OBVIOUSLY, I WASN'T AWARE OF WHAT AMBASSADOR

SWANK SAID. BUT NOTHING THAT HE SAID WOULD BE INCONSISTENT WITH WHAT I SAID. AS A MATTER OF FACT, I THINK I WAS VERY CAREFUL TO USE THE WORDS THAT THERE WAS A SERIES OF CONTACTS. I USED SUCH A WORD AS "DISCUSSIONS." I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING THAT UNCLASSIFIED

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WAS INCONSISTENT WITH WHAT HE HAS SAID.

I DIDN'T GO SO FAR AS HE WENT IN ANY IDENTIFICATION, AND I DON'T INTEND TO.

Q BUT THAT IMPLIES SOMETHING MUCH LESS THAN THIS STATEMENT.

A NO, IT DOESN'T.

Q BECAUSE THIS STATEMENT SAYS NEGOTIATIONS HAD APPROACHED A SERIOUS STAGE.

A THAT IS CORRECT -- THAT IS CORRECT.

Q TWO QUESTIONS, PHIL. ARE THE CAMBODIANS SHORT OF AMMUNITION IN THE CURRENT BATTLE?

A I'M PREPARED TO DISCUSS OTHER THINGS IF YOU WANT, BUT I THOUGHT I CAME DOWN TO TALK ABOUT THIS RATHER STALWART SUBJECT.

Q. WILL YOU TAKE THOSE QUESTIONS LATER?

A WELL, I DON'T KNOW. BOB, ARE WE GOING TO HAVE A FREE-RUNNING PRESS CONFERENCE ON CAMBODIA? I MEAN I, FRANKLY, DIDN'T BRING ANY FIGURES. I DIDN'T BRING THE USUAL KIND OF RAZZLE-DAZZLE THAT PUBLIC OFFICIALS BRING BEFORE YOU. ALL I BROUGHT WAS MY OWN TWO HANDS AND A COPY. I'M NOT SO SURE I WANT TO DO THAT IN THIS WAY. I THINK YOU OUGHT TO SUBMIT THOSE KINDS OF QUESTIONS DIRECTLY TO THE SPOKESMAN TOMORROW. AND WE'LL GIVE HIM FORMAL GUIDANCE. SO WHY DON'T I TAKE THE QUESTION? I COULDN'T ANSWER YOU RIGHT NOW IF I HAD TO BECAUSE I DON'T HAVE THE TONNAGE RATES AND ALL THE REST OF THAT WITH ME.

BUT THE ANSWER IS THERE IS A SERIOUS SITUATION WITH RESPECT TO THE SUPPLY OF ARMS AND MUNITIONS IN CAMBODIA WHICH IS QUITE OBVIOUSLY STATED IN THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE TO CONGRESS WHEN HE ASKED FOR UNCLASSIFIED

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SUPPLEMENTAL ASSISTANCE. HE WOULDN'T HAVE DONE IT IF HE HADN'T. AND THE SITUATION DOES REQUIRE ACTION IN THAT SENSE. BUT IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO ANSWER YOU SPECIFICALLY I JUST DON'T HAVE THE MATERIAL.

Q WHAT I'M REALLY GETTING AT IS THE NUB QUESTION, WHICH I GUESS YOU CAN'T ANSWER. THAT IS WHETHER THERE IS ANY REASONABLE HOPE IN THE PRESENT SITUATION THAT THE ADDITIONAL AID YOU ARE ASKING FOR WILL --

A IF THERE WEREN'T THE PRESIDENT WOULDN'T HAVE ASKED FOR IT. THE ANSWER IS YES. AND I WOULD SAY FURTHER THAT I THINK FROM WHAT ONE HAS HEARD AND SEEN DURING THE COURSE OF THE RECENT VISIT -- AND I WAS OUT THERE WITH THAT CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION -- I WOULD SAY YES THAT, TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTION, REASONABLE HOPE IS A FAIRLY GOOD WAY OF PUTTING IT.

Q REASONABLE HOPE?

Q MR. HABIB, I WOULD LIKE TO ASK TWO QUESTIONS.

THE FIRST ONE, THOSE CONTACTS YOU WERE REFERRING TO, CAN YOU SAY WHETHER THEY WERE BETWEEN THE AMERICANS ON ONE SIDE AND THE INSURGENT KHMER ON THE OTHER OR BETWEEN THE TWO KHMER PARTIES.

AND MY SECOND QUESTION WOULD BE, THIS CAMBODIAN ISSUE HAS BEEN GOING ON FOR A LONG TIME, WHY HAS THIS PARTICULAR TIME BEEN CHOSEN TO SUDDENLY COME BACK ON THIS LONG HISTORY OF FAILURE?

A WELL, TO ANSWER YOUR FIRST QUESTION, THERE WERE A VARIETY OF CONTACTS WITH VARIOUS ELEMENTS IN VARIOUS CHANNELS THAT COULD BE USEFUL. THAT'S THE WAY I WOULD DESCRIBE THEM. AND YOU COULD DRAW ANY CONCLUSIONS YOU WANT.

AS TO YOUR SECOND QUESTION, -- WHY NOW? -- IT'S QUITE OBVIOUS WHY NOW. FIRST OF ALL, THE ADMINISTRATION IS IN THE COURSE OF ASKING THE CONGRESS AND THE

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AMERICAN PEOPLE TO SUPPORT, TO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT, AND TO, IN EFFECT, APPROPRIATE ADDITIONAL SUPPORT THAN THAT WHICH HAS ALREADY BEEN APPROPRIATED FOR CAMBODIA.

IN THE COURSE OF THE DISCUSSION, BOTH PUBLIC AND CONGRESSIONAL, THAT HAS SURROUNDED THAT REQUEST AND THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT LED TO IT, THERE HAVE BEEN QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS, AND VERY LEGITIMATE QUESTIONS AND VERY LEGITIMATE COMMENTS IN SOME CASES, REGARDING THE EFFORTS TO SETTLE THE MATTER PEACEFULLY. AND IT WAS DEEMED DESIRABLE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION TO SET CLEAR THE RECORD SO THAT BOTH THE CONGRESS AND THE PUBLIC WOULD KNOW THAT NO ONE ON THIS SIDE PREFERS THE COURSE OF APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR WAR.

THE PREFERENCE IS CLEAR. THE PREFERENCE IS FOR A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT. THE PRESIDENT HAS STATED THAT FREQUENTLY IN THE PAST. IT CONTINUES TO BE OUR POLICY. IT CONTINUES TO BE THE FUNDAMENTAL POLICY OF THE KHMER GOVERNMENT. THE SEARCH FOR A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT HAS NOT BEEN THWARTED BY ANY ACTION, ANY POSITION, TAKEN EITHER ON OUR SIDE OR ON THE SIDE OF THE KHMER GOVERNMENT.

Q MR. HABIB, YOU SAY THAT YOU TRIED TO ESTABLISH A DIRECT CONTACT WITH SIHANOUK IN FEBRUARY AND THE LAST ONE RECEIVED NO RESPONSE. HE SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN IN TOUCH WITH A GREAT MANY PEOPLE IN THIS COUNTRY AND IS INDEED OFFERING TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE UNITED STATES RATHER THAN WITH LON NOL.

A YOU WILL NOT FIND ANY SUCH OFFER IN HIS RECENT STATEMENTS. LET'S GET THE FACTS STRAIGHT. HE'S BEEN MAKING A LOT OF STATEMENTS AND HE HAS BEEN SENDING A LOT OF STATEMENTS TO PEOPLE, BUT YOUR FINAL COMMENT WAS WRONG. NOW WHAT IS YOUR QUESTION?

Q WELL, THE CENTRAL QUESTION IS, YOU WILL SAY THAT THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS HAS BEEN AS LONG AS THE CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN IN A POSITION THAT REMAINS PRECARIOUS, BUT DO YOU THINK IN FACT THAT CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT CAN SUSTAIN ITSELF EVEN UNTIL
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THE DEBATE IN THE CONGRESS IS OVER ON THE MILITARY AID SITUATION? HOW CLOSE IS PHNOM PENH TO FALLING?

A IF FUNDS ARE VOTED WITHIN A REASONABLE PERIOD OF TIME, THE ANSWER IS, AS I SAID A WHILE AGO, THAT THE CHANCES ARE QUITE REASONABLE THAT THEY WILL SURVIVE.

Q MR. HABIB, ARE WE TALKING HISTORY HERE OF SOMETHING THAT IS OVER, OR IS THERE ANY REASONABLE HOPE FOR A NEGOTIATION?

A WE WILL CONTINUE TO HOPE THAT THERE IS REASONABLE HOPE FOR A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT. BUT THE EVIDENCE IS QUITE CLEAR THAT AS FAR AS THE OTHER SIDE IS CONCERNED, THAT WHEN THEY PURSUE THEIR OBJECTIVES THROUGH THE USE OF FORCE, AND IF THEY HAVE HOPE FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THAT OBJECTIVE THROUGH THE USE OF FORCE, THAT THEY THEN HAVE LESS INTEREST IN A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT.

Q WELL, MR. HABIB --

A LET ME FINISH. ONE OF THE REASONS, OF COURSE, THAT THE ADMINISTRATION MAKES VERY CLEAR IN SEEKING THE SUPPLEMENTAL ASSISTANCE IS THAT IT IS NOT SEEKING THIS ASSISTANCE IN ORDER TO PRODUCE MILITARY VICTORY BUT IS SEEKING IT IN ORDER TO SUPPORT THE POLICY BOTH OF OURSELVES AND OF THE GKR, OF THE KHMER GOVERNMENT, TO SEEK A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT.

Q IN AUGUST OF 1973 WERE CERTAIN KEY MEMBERS OF CONGRESS INFORMED OF THE STATUS OF THESE NEGOTIATIONS?

A NOT AS FAR AS I KNOW. IF YOU'LL RECALL, THAT WAS A RATHER HECTIC PERIOD IN THE POLITICAL HISTORY OF THIS COUNTRY.

Q YES, I RECOGNIZE THAT. BUT, ON THE OTHER HAND, YOU'RE MAKING SOMETHING OF AN ACCUSATION HERE.

A I'M NOT. THIS IS AN OFFICIAL STATEMENT.
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Q WELL, IN ESSENCE, IT'S AN ACCUSATION, IS IT NOT? MY POINT IS HOW COULD THESE FOLKS WHO DID WHAT THEY DID DO ANYTHING ELSE HAD THEY NOT KNOWN THAT THESE NEGOTIATIONS WERE UNDERWAY?(SIC).

A I WOULDN'T CALL THIS AN ACCUSATION AS MUCH AS I WOULD --

Q WELL, WHAT DO YOU WANT TO CALL IT?

A LET JUST IDENTIFY IT BECAUSE I THINK IN IDENTIFYING IT IT BECOMES QUITE CLEAR WHAT THE PURPOSE OF STATING IT WAS. THE PURPOSE OF STATING IT WAS TO INDICATE QUITE CLEARLY, FIRST OF ALL, THAT EFFORTS WERE UNDERWAY THAT WERE IN A CERTAIN DEGREE BEARING FRUIT. SECONDLY, THERE'S NO QUESTION IT'S A STATEMENT

OF FACT THAT WHEN THE HALT WAS VOTED THE CHANNEL
BROKE. NOW, THAT'S A STATEMENT OF FACT.

NOW, THE CONSEQUENCES OF IT ARE QUITE CLEAR. THE
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ONE FACTOR AND THE OTHER FACTOR
IS QUITE CLEAR.

Q DO YOU BELIEVE THAT IF WE RESUMED THE BOMBING
NOW IT WOULD HELP THE CAUSE OF NEGOTIATIONS?

A NOBODY IS TALKING ABOUT THAT. YOU KNOW VERY WELL
THAT'S NOT AT ALL IN MIND. THAT'S A DECISION WHICH, AS
YOU KNOW, HAS NOT BEEN -- IT'S A PROPOSAL
WHICH HAS NOT BEEN MADE. IT HAS NOT BEEN SERIOUSLY
DISCUSSED, AND IS COMPLETELY OUTSIDE THE PARAMETERS --

Q IT MIGHT BE OUTSIDE THE PARAMETERS --

A -- BECAUSE THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN THE FIRST
PLACE ARE DIFFERENT. AND SECONDLY, AS YOU KNOW VERY
WELL, THAT ISN'T SOMETHING THAT ONE TURNS ON AND
OFF OR EVEN DISCUSSES IN SUCH A LIGHTEARTED WAY.
ANY SUCH DECISIONS IN THAT REGARD WOULD HAVE TO BE
BY THE CONGRESS. AND THERE IS NOT SUCH A PROPOSAL.
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Q WELL, WOULDN'T IT BE CONSISTENT WITH WHAT
YOU'RE SUGGESTING HERE TO ASK CONGRESS FOR

PERMISSION NOW TO RESUME THE BOMBING?

A NO. WHAT IS CONSISTENT WITH MY SUGGESTION HERE
IS THAT THE CONGRESS -- IS EXACTLY WHAT WE HAVE
ASKED THE CONGRESS, TO PROVIDE THE RESOURCES FOR
THESE PEOPLE TO SUSTAIN THEMSELVES SUFFICIENTLY
SO THAT THE SITUATION CAN -- SO THAT THE CIRCUMSTANCES
CAN BE CREATED IN WHICH THE OTHER SIDE WOULD, HOPEFULLY,
SEE THE VALIDITY AND WISDOM OF A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT
RATHER THAN A CONTINUATION OF THE WAR.

Q BUT YOU SAY THIS IS AN OFFICIAL STATMENT, NOT
AN ACCUSATION. IT IS GOING TO BE READ BY LEGISLATORS
AS AN ACCUSATION. WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO SHOW THE
CLASSIFIED RECORD ON THIS TO THE SENATE FOREIGN
RELATIONS COMMITTEE AND THE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE SO THAT THE MATTER CAN BE CLEARED UP?

A TO THE PRINCIPALS OF THOSE COMMITTEES? YOU
MEAN TO THE CHAIRMAN AND THE RANKING MEMBER IN THE

USUAL WAY? IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT?

Q I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY WHAT IS THE USUAL WAY.

A WELL, AS I UNDERSTAND IT, THAT'S THE NORMAL
PROCEDURE.

Q WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO SHOW THE RECORD TO THEM?

A IT HAS BEEN DONE.

Q MR. AMBASSADOR, YOU'RE LINKING ALL OF THESE
CONTACTS WITH A SINGLE MAN, SIHANOUK. THERE APPEARS
TO BE SOME QUESTION WHETHER HE, IN FACT, IS THE RIGHT
DOOR TO KNOCK ON.

A IF YOU WILL NOTICE, IN ONE ITEM THAT IS NOT SO.
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Q WHICH ITEM IS THAT?

A YOU'LL SEE THE ITEM --

Q WHO DID YOU CONTACT?

A YOU KNOW, I DON'T KNOW HOW MANY TIMES YOU HAVE TO
DANCE AROUND ON THE HEAD OF A PIN TO SATISFY. I'M
NOT GOING TO TELL YOU WHO AT ANY POINT WITH REGARD TO

ANY ONE OF THESE ITEMS.

Q WELL, GOING TO YOUR POINT NUMBER 3, YOU SAY
THE PERSONALITIES INVOLVED WILL NOT, THEMSELVES,
CONSTITUTE OBSTACLES OF ANY KIND TO A SETTLEMENT.
CAN THAT BE TAKEN AS A SIGNAL TO ANYBODY WHO WANTS
TO RECEIVE IT THAT WE DO NOT CONSIDER LON NOL
INDISPENSABLE TO THE FUTURE OF CAMBODIA?

A THAT IS A QUESTION WHICH LON NOL AND THE
PEOPLE OF CAMBODIA WILL DECIDE FOR THEMSELVES.
NOW, I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE QUITE CLEAR TO YOU -- AND
I THINK YOU OUGHT TO BE AWARE OF THE FACT -- THAT IS
A QUESTION WHICH IN MANY WAYS THEY HAVE SOUGHT
TO ANSWER. JUST THIS MORNING I READ A WIRE SERVICE --
I READ THE WIRE SERVICE EVERY MORNING, AND I BROUGHT
THIS ALONG -- WHEN THE QUESTION WAS ASKED OF THE
CAMBODIAN PRIME MINISTER, LONG BORET -- THIS IS --
I GUESS I SHOULDN'T MENTION -- OR SHOULD I MENTION IT --
I THINK IT'S REUTERS, I'M NOT SURE -- AT A PRESS

CONFERENCE IN PHNOM PENH PRIME MINISTER LONG BORET WAS QUESTIONED REPEATEDLY ABOUT REPORTS THAT LON NOL AND HIS GOVERNMENT RESIGN AND TURN OVER POWER TO A REGIME WITH WHICH COMMUNIST-LED REBELS WOULD NEGOTIATE. HE REPLIED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD MAKE ANY SACRIFICE IF IT WERE SURE THIS WOULD LEAD TO PEACE. BUT THEN HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT THERE WOULD BE NO RESIGNATION UNTIL NEGOTIATIONS BEGAN, AND HE SAID IT WOULD LEAVE THE COUNTRY WITHOUT A LEGAL GOVERNMENT, WHICH WOULD LESSEN THE CHANCE OF MEANINGFUL NEGOTIATIONS. UNCLASSIFIED

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THAT'S WHAT HE SAID. NOW, IN THE COURSE OF THE DISCUSSION WITH THE MEMBERS OF THE CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION MARSHAL LON NOL MADE IT VERY CLEAR, AS HAS BEEN REPORTED IN THE PRESS -- HE SAID SOMETHING TO THE EFFECT THAT HE'S IN POWER AND IN OFFICE AS A RESULT OF AN INSTITUTIONALIZED PROCESS BUT THAT FOR THE PEACE OF HIS COUNTRY HE WOULD DO WHATEVER IS POSSIBLE -- "MAKE ANY SACRIFICE" I THINK ARE THE WORDS HE USED -- SO THAT PEACE AND WELFARE OF THE PEOPLE COULD BE ACHIEVED. NOW, THAT IS WHAT THEY HAVE SAID. WHATEVER INTERPRETATION YOU WISH TO PUT IN THAT YOU MAY MAKE.

Q MR. SECRETARY, FOLLOWING UP LES'S QUESTION, YOU SAID THAT THE PRINCIPALS ON THE SENATE AND ON THE HOUSE SIDE HAVE BEEN INFORMED. CAN YOU TELL

US WHEN THAT TOOK PLACE, PLEASE?

A I THINK I HAD BETTER STAND WHERE I STAND ON THAT. YOU MEAN IN TERMS OF THIS -- OF THE DETAILS OF THIS?

Q THE DETAILS. WHEN WAS THAT CONVEYED TO THEM?

A VERY RECENTLY. AT THE TIME THAT THIS WAS COMPILED. IF YOU RECALL, YESTERDAY IT WAS BEING COMPILED. IT WAS ONLY COMPILED YESTERDAY.

Q AND THESE PRINCIPALS WERE ONLY INFORMED OF THE DETAILS THAT YOU CAN'T TELL US ONLY YESTERDAY.

A THAT IS CORRECT.

Q MR. SECRETARY, YOU SAID IF CONGRESS VOTES THE FUNDS, THAT THEY CAN HOLD OUT A REASONABLE TIME. WHAT IF YOU DON'T GET THE FUNDS? HOW LONG CAN CAMBODIA HOLD OUT?

A OF COURSE THAT DEPENDS IN PART ON THE LEVEL OF CONFLICT. IF THE LEVEL OF CONFLICT IS INTENSE AND UNCLASSIFIED

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HIGH, THEN THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO THE KHMER GOVERNMENT IN ITS DEFENSE WILL BE USED UP AT ONE RATE. IF THE LEVEL OF CONFLICT IS LOW, THEY WILL BE USED UP AT ANOTHER RATE. SO, IF YOU COULD TELL ME WHAT THE LEVEL OF CONFLICT IS GOING TO BE, THEN YOU CAN RUN SOME KIND OF A MEASURE AGAINST STOCKAGES AND AMOUNTS IN PIPELINES AND OBLIGATION OF AUTHORITY, AND YOU CAN COME OUT WITH SOME KIND OF ARITHMETICAL SOLUTION. BUT EVEN THEN THE ANSWER IS THESE THINGS DON'T HAPPEN ON SOME KIND OF RITUAL EQUATION THAT YOU CAN CALCULATE MATHEMATICALLY. T IT WOULD CERTAINLY NOT BE VERY LONG, WITHOUT SUPPLEMENTARY ASSISTANCE. BUT JUST HOW LONG IS VERY DIFFICULT IP TO ESTIMATE PRECISELY.

Q MR. SECRETARY, AS LATE AS FEBRUARY YOU ARE STILL TRYING.

A THAT IS CORRECT.

Q YOU MAKE THIS ATTEMPT --

A AS LATE AS -- WHAT IS TODAY -- MARCH 5TH, ONE WOULD BE WILLING TO TRY.

Q TELL ME WHETHER YOUR ATTEMPT IS JUST TO GET TALKS

STARTED, OR ARE YOU PROPOSING SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES TO BE DICUSSED?

A IF YOU WILL NOTICE, IN THE PAPER ITSELF, IT SAYS -- I THINK AT ONE STAGE IN THERE, AT ONE PLACE WE USE THE PHRASE THAT WE CONVEYED, THE UNITED STATES CONVEYED -- ITS IDEAS TO PROMOTE. NOW THAT IS SIGNIFICANT.

IN ANOTHER PHRASE WE SAY, "WE AGAIN INDICATED WITH SPECIFICITY OUR READINESS TO SEE A COMPROMISE SETTLEMENT IN WHICH ALL ELEMENTS COULD PLAY A ROLE." IN ANOTHER PLACE WE SAY--WE ADVISE THEM OF OUR EFFORTS TO MOVE THE CONFLICT AND OF THE DEGREE OF FLEXIBILITY IN OUR APPROACH.

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THEN, OF COURSE, IN THE LATTER PART OF THE THING, WE STATE THE PRINCIPLES WHICH HAVE GUIDED US. SO THEREFORE IT IS QUITE CLEAR THAT ALL OF THOSE WORDS AND PHRASES WERE CAREFULLY CHOSEN TO GIVE YOU SOME IDEA THAT WE WERE TALKING ABOUT RATHER CONCRETE AND SPECIFIC THINGS.

Q. HAVE THESE THREE PRINCIPLES GUIDED THE NEGOTIATIONS FROM POINT NUMBER ONE HERE WHEN THEY WERE PROMISING, UNTIL THE END?

A. YOU KNOW, I EXPECT I READ YOUR WORDS VERY CAREFULLY. I WISH YOU WOULD READ MY WORDS JUST AS CAREFULLY. IN THIS PROCESS, WE ARE, AND HAVE BEEN, GUIDED BY THEM.

Q. HAVE BEEN SINCE WHEN?

A. SINCE THE BEGINNING.

Q. WHEN WAS THE BEGINNING, THOUGH? YOU STARTED IN 1973 HERE. WERE THERE ANY PREVIOUS EFFORTS?

A. IF YOU WILL READ THE FIRST PARAGRAPH, IT SAYS, "THROUGHOUT THE NEGOTIATIONS THAT LED TO THE PARIS AGREEMENT--BOTH IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS AND THROUGH OTHER CHANNELS . . ." I REMIND YOU THAT THE PARIS NEGOTIATIONS ENDED IN JANUARY '73, BUT THE NEGOTIATION PROCESS HAD BEEN GOING ON FOR FOUR YEARS PRIOR TO THAT.

IN THE CASE OF CAMBODIA, OF COURSE CAMBODIA DIDN'T BECOME THE KIND OF PROBLEM THAT WOULD REQUIRE DISCUSSIONS UNTIL ABOUT 1971 OR SO. SO THAT IT WAS PRIOR TO--YES, '71 AND '72, AS WELL.

Q. WHY DO YOU DATE IT FROM '71, WHEN THE FIGHTING STARTED IN '70. WHAT HAPPENED IN '71?

A. WELL, IN '70, IT WAS A DIFFERENT KIND OF FIGHTING. OR SAY '70 THEN, BUT REMEMBER, WE DIDN'T ACTUALLY GET INTO --INVOLVED. WHAT HAPPENED IN '71 IS A VERY SIMPLE THING. YOU ALL REMEMBER -- WASN'T IT IN '71? YOU ARE AN EXPERT
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ON HISTORY. WHAT WAS IN THE SPRING OF '70--'70 OR '71?

Q. THE INCURSION. IN MARCH OF '70.

A. MAY AND JUNE. NOW I REMEMBER. '70.

Q. THAT WAS '70. YOU ARE DATING OUR EFFORTS TO GET--.

A. NO, I DATED OUR EFFORTS "DURING THE NEGOTIATIONS", IS WHAT IT SAID.

Q. BUT WHEN DID CAMBODIA SPECIFICALLY--.

A. NEGOTIATIONS STARTED IN 1968. FROM THE BEGINNING, IN THOSE NEGOTIATIONS--AND IF YOU READ THE FINAL AGREEMENT, YOU WILL SEE THERE IS A SECTION, THERE IS AN ARTICLE IN THE AGREEMENT, THAT DEALS WITH CAMBODIA. FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE NEGOTIATIONS IN PARIS, CAMBODIA, LAOS AND VIETNAM WERE ALL SORT OF CONSIDERED IN A WAY AS PART OF THE SAME KIND OF PROBLEM. SO THE QUESTION OF A RESOLUTION OF THE PROBLEMS IN CAMBODIA WAS ALWAYS PART OF THE NEGOTIATIONS.

Q. BUT SIHANOUK WAS STILL IN PHNOM PENH.

A. THAT IS CORRECT. BUT THE NORTH VIETNAMESE FORCES HAPPENED TO BE IN CAMBODIA AT THAT TIME.

Q. MR. SECRETARY, GIVEN THE--

A. THEREFORE, IN THE COURSE OF THE DISCUSSION WITH NORTH VIETNAM ABOUT THE SITUATION, YOU HAD TO DISCUSS THE QUESTION OF CAMBODIA ALSO. YES. WELL, THIS GENTLEMAN IS NEXT. LET ME KEEP SOME KIND OF ORDER HERE.

Q. WITHOUT GETTING INVOLVED IN SEMANTIC ARGUMENTS ABOUT WHETHER THIS IS AN ACCUSATION OR WHETHER IT IS A STATEMENT OF FACT, IN THE THIRD PARAGRAPH ON PAGE ONE, WE ARE TALKING ABOUT THE BOMBING HALT. THE LANGUAGE YOU USE THERE IS THAT THE PASSAGE OF THE BOMBING HALT, AS A RESULT OF THAT, THEY --QUOTE--"WERE THWARTED".
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A. THAT IS CORRECT.

Q. IN YOUR DISCUSSION WITH THE APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL PEOPLE IN THE LAST DAY OR SO, WHERE YOU PUT FORTH THE VARIOUS EVIDENCES, DO YOU HAVE, AND DID YOU PRESENT, EVIDENCE THAT THE TALKS THAT WERE THEN ON-GOING WERE INDEED THWARTED BY THEM?

A. YES

Q. MR. SECRETARY, WOULD YOU TELL US, SIR, ON THE BASIS

OF YOUR LAST TRIP OUT THERE WITH THE CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION, AND YOUR GENERAL EXPERTISE IN THE AREA, WHAT EFFECT THE FALL OF CAMBODIA WOULD HAVE ON THE SURROUNDING COUNTRIES OF SOUTHEAST ASIA.

A. SPENCE, YOU ARE TRYING TO BRING ME INTO A GENERAL PRESS CONFERENCE ON THE RECORD, AND I AM JUST NOT--YOU KNOW, I WOULD RATHER THAT WE LEAVE THOSE KINDS OF QUESTIONS FOR OTHER TIMES.

Q. THAT IS VALID TO THIS STORY.

A. NOT PARTICULARLY. WELL, NOT PARTICULARLY, AND I REALLY WOULD RATHER GO THROUGH THIS THING, AND THEN YOU COME ON UP TO THE OFFICE AND IN THE USUAL WAY, WE CAN HAVE A GENERAL CONVERSATION. WHAT I MEAN IS, YOU KNOW, I JUST DON'T

WANT TO GET INTO A BROAD GENERAL QUESTION AND ANSWER ON THE AREA. LET'S SEE IF WE CAN CONFINE IT TO THIS SUBJECT. THEN YOU CAN PUT YOUR QUESTIONS IN THE NORMAL WAY, AND I CONSIDER THE NORMAL WAY BOTH TO THE NORMAL SPOKESMAN AND THEN, AS MOST OF YOU USUALLY DO, YOU CALL ME UP OR YOU DROP IN, AND SOMETIMES I SAY I WON'T SEE YOU AND SOMETIMES I SAY I WILL.

Q. MR. HABIB, THE SITUATION IN AUGUST OF 1973 AS A RESULT OF THE BOMBING MADE THE NEGOTIATIONS REACH THAT SERIOUS STAGE. I MEAN, HOW DID IT AFFECT THE CAMBODIAN UNCLASSIFIED

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COMMUNISTS--THE KHMER ROUGE?

A. WELL, I WOULD SUGGEST THAT, JUST LIKE IN MOST SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES, THAT THERE WAS SOMETHING THAT THEY DIDN'T WANT TO GO ON. AND IN ORDER TO GET IT TO STOP, THEY OBVIOUSLY WOULD HAVE BEEN PREPARED TO GIVE SOMETHING FOR IT. AND THEN THEY GOT IT WITHOUT GIVING ANYTHING FOR IT.

Q. MR. HABIB, THIS ALL STARTED--OR AT LEAST IT STARTED YESTERDAY--WITH A RESPONSE BY THE SPOKESMAN IN REGARD TO A STORY THAT THE SECRETARY WAS NOT REALLY ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT ALL THIS. CAN YOU TELL US ON WHAT LEVEL THESE VARIOUS NEGOTIATING EFFORTS WERE MADE? IS THE SECRETARY DIRECTLY INVOLVED? AND, SECONDLY, AREN'T YOU REALLY DOWN HERE BECAUSE THE SECRETARY HAS TAKEN PERSONAL PIQUE AT THE CHARGE THAT HE DIDN'T REALLY CARE ABOUT WHAT WAS GOING ON IN THE NEGOTIATIONS?

A. I DON'T CONSIDER THE SECRETARY ACTS ON MATTERS OF

FOREIGN POLICY OUT OF PERSONAL PIQUE. AND I THINK THE SECRETARY ACTS ON MATTERS OF FOREIGN POLICY WHEN HE

DETERMINES WHAT THE INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES ARE, AND HOW THEY SHOULD BE BEST PURSUED.

NOW, AS FAR AS THE STORIES WERE CONCERNED, YES, THERE WERE SOME STORIES ABOUT THAT LACK OF ENTHUSIASM. AS FAR AS YOUR QUESTION IS CONCERNED, THE SECRETARY HAS ALWAYS BEEN INVOLVED IN THESE MATTERS. HE CONTINUES TO BE INVOLVED IN THESE MATTERS. IN EVERY INSTANCE THE SECRETARY HAS HAD A DIRECT INVOLVEMENT IN THESE MATTERS. AND I DON'T KNOW HOW THAT --HOW I CAN CONVEY TO YOU IN ANY BETTER WAY THE INTENSE INTEREST THAT HE HAS HAD, CONTINUOUSLY HAD, IN THE ACHIEVEMENT OF A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT IN CAMBODIA.

Q. IS THE SECRETARY INVOLVED IN THE EFFORTS OF FEBRUARY 1975 TO ESTABLISH A DIRECT CONTACT WITH SIHANOUK?

A. NOW YOU ARE STARTING TO GET INTO THE DETAILS. I WILL SAY THIS. THE SECRETARY HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN ALL OF THESE UNCLASSIFIED

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EFFORTS IN THE SENSE THAT THE SECRETARY IS THE EXECUTOR OF FOREIGN POLICY.

Q. MR. HABIB, TWO QUESTIONS. IS IT CORRECT THAT THE OTHER SIDE WAS THE PRINCIPAL PARTY IN BREAKING OFF THE NEGOTIATIONS?

A. NO, THEY WERE NOT THE PRINCIPAL PARTY IN THWARTING THEM; THEY WERE THE ONLY PARTY.

Q. THE ONLY PARTY. AND COULD YOU TELL US IF THE CONGRESSIONAL PRINCIPALS TO WHOM YOU GAVE THIS INFORMATION RECENTLY AGREED WITH YOUR ASSESSMENT THAT IT WAS--?

A. I COULDN'T JUDGE. I DID WHAT ONE NORMALLY DOES IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES. AND I GOT A QUESTION AND I ANSWERED IT HONESTLY THAT THE LEADERSHIP WAS INFORMED.

Q. THANK YOU, VERY MUCH, SIR.

Q. MR. HABIB, COULD WE ASK YOU A FEW MORE QUESTIONS? THERE ARE A LOT OF THINGS THAT HAVE BEEN LEFT HANGING HERE.

A. LOOK, WHO IS THE BOSS? BOB, I WILL STAY A LITTLE LONGER, BUT YOU'VE GOT TO COME TO AN END SOMEHOW.

SOMEBODY IS THE BOSS. WHO IS THE SENIOR?

Q. I AM, AND I CALLED IT, BUT IF YOU HAVE SOME MORE QUESTIONS.

A. WELL, SOMEBODY HAS GOT TO DECIDE. WE WILL TAKE TWO MORE.

Q. PRINCE SIHANOUK HAS SAID SEVERAL TIMES THAT HE WAS WILLING TO MEET WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER. HOW WOULD YOU CLARIFY THIS STATEMENT FROM SIHANOUK?

A. SIHANOUK SAYS MANY THINGS, AND I WOULD TAKE A LOOK AT SOME OF HIS LATEST STATEMENTS, AND I WOULD FIND NO SUCH REFERENCE. AND I DO FIND NO SUCH REFERENCE.

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Q. MR. SECRETARY, IN CONNECTION WITH THE INFORMATION THAT HAS BEEN RELAYED TO THE PRINCIPALS IN CONGRESS, I TAKE IT THAT AT THE TIME OF THE BOMBING HALT YOU DID NOT PRESENT EVIDENCE TO CONGRESS TO DEMONSTRATE TO THEM THAT A BOMBING HALT WOULD THWART SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS.

A. I AM NOT AWARE OF EXACTLY WHAT WENT ON AT THAT TIME, FOR A VERY SIMPLE REASON--I WASN'T HERE. AND THE RECORD DOESN'T SHOW ALL THAT KIND OF THING. EVEN THE PRESIDENT WHO WAS PRESIDENT AT THAT TIME WASN'T HERE. BUT THE RECORD DOES SHOW WHAT WAS STATED PUBLICLY BEFORE THE BILL WAS PASSED, WHEN THE BILL WAS VETOED, AND AFTER THE BILL WAS SIGNED. SO THERE IS NO QUESTION BUT THAT THE ADMINISTRATION MADE THE POSITION CLEAR.

NOW, WHAT DETAIL WAS PROVIDED, I AM JUST SORRY, I AM NOT INFORMED. THEREFORE I CAN'T ANSWER YOUR QUESTION.

Q. THE SECOND HALF OF MY QUESTION.

A. OH-H-H. (LAUGHTER.) CLEVER.

Q. WHO DO YOU THINK IS ULTIMATELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE LACK OF RESPONSE ON THE OTHER SIDE?

A. THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT THE ULTIMATE RESPONSIBILITY LIES ON THE SIDE OF THE KHMER COMMUNISTS. THEY SEEM DETERMINED TO PURSUE THE MILITARY COURSE SO LONG AS IT APPEARS THAT THE MILITARY COURSE WILL ACHIEVE THEIR OBJECTIVE. THERE IS NOTHING UNUSUAL ABOUT THAT. THERE IS NOTHING THAT SHOULD SURPRISE A BUNCH OF WISE OLD HEADS LIKE YOU. AND I AM CERTAIN IT DOESN'T SURPRISE MR. GALLUP WHO HAS HAD CONSIDERABLE EXPERIENCE IN THESE

MATTER.

Q. WHAT ABOUT THE ROLE OF THE CHINESE AND THE NORTH
VIETNAMESE?

A. I AM NOT GOING TO DISCUSS ANY INDIVIDUAL ROLES BY ANY

INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES. YOU CAN DRAW ANY CONCLUSIONS
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YOU WANT, ONE WAY OR THE OTHER.

THANK YOU.

Q. THANK YOU, VERY MUCH.

(THE BRIEFING TERMINATED AT 3:47 P.M.)

FOLLOWING IS TRANSCRIPT OF ADDITIONAL SESSION IMMEDIATELY
FOLLOWING ABOVE, DONE ON CAMERA:

MR HABIB: AS MANY OF YOU KNOW, THERE'S BEEN SOME COMMENT
AND SOME SPECULATION ABOUT THE PROSPECTS FOR A NEGOTIATED
SETTLEMENT IN CAMBODIA. IT HAS BEEN DECIDED TO ISSUE THE
SUMMARY WHICH YOU HAVE BEFORE YOU, WHICH OUTLINES THE EF-
FORTS THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT HAS MADE OVER
THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS TO BRING ABOUT AN EARLY COMPROMISE
SETTLEMENT IN CAMBODIA.

WHAT THE RECORD ATTEMPTS TO PRESENT IS SOME KIND OF A PIC-
TURE OF A SUSTAINED, CONCERTED AND CONTINUAL EFFORT TO
BRING A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT TO A WAR WHICH HAS GONE ON TOO
LONG. THE WAR IN CAMBODIA DOES NOT CONTINUE BY ANY LACK
OF EFFORT ON THE PART OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT
OR ON THE PART OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE KHMER REPUBLIC TO
BRING ABOUT A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT.

I'LL TAKE ANY QUESTIONS.

Q. YOU SAY IN THIS RELEASE HERE THAT YOUR EFFORTS
TOWARDS NEGOTIATIONS WERE THWARTED BY THE BOMBING HALT.
WHAT EVIDENCE DO YOU HAVE THAT IT WAS THE BOMBING HALT
SPECIFICALLY THAT THWARTED THE NEGOTIATIONS OR THE EFFORTS
TOWARDS NEGOTIATIONS?

A. IN 1973, THERE WERE A SERIES OF CONTACTS AND DISCUS-
SIONS DIRECTED TOWARD ACHEIVING A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF
THE WAR IN CAMBODIA. THERE WERE EXCHANGES WHICH WERE
VERY PROMISING. THEY WERE REACHING A SERIOUS STAGE.
AND, AT THAT POINT, WITH THE LEGISLATED CUT-OFF OF THE

BOMBING, THESE DISCUSSIONS AND THESE EFFORTS WERE ENDED.

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Q. CAN YOU GIVE US ANY--

A. THEY WERE ENDED BY THE OTHER SIDE.

Q. CAN YOU GIVE US AN IDEA OF THE TIME SPAN BETWEEN THE BOMBING HALT AND THE END OF THE TALKS?

A. IT WAS ALMOST ONE FOR ONE IN THAT RESPECT.

Q. DO YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAID SPECIFICALLY AT THAT POINT ABOUT THE BOMBING?

A. THEY JUST STOPPED. THERE WAS JUST NO CONTINUATION OF THE PRECESS OF DISCUSSION AND CONTACT WHICH HAD EEN

GOING ON FOR SEVERAL MONTHS PREVIOUS TO THE BOMBING HALT.

Q. MR. SECRETARY --

A. YES.

Q. -- YOU MENTIONED THAT, PERHAPS INFERENTIALLY, IT WAS THE CONGRESS WHICH WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BREAKDOWN AT THAT POINT OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. I'M WONDERING: DID ANY MEMBERS OF CONGRESS AT THAT TIME KNOW WHAT THE SITUATION WAS AND THAT THERE WERE FRUITFUL DISCUSSIONS WHICH WERE NEARING COMPLETION?

A. THERE'S NO INTENTION TO LEVY RESPONSIBILITY. THE STATEMENT IS A STATEMENT OF FACT--THAT THOSE ARE A SERIES OF FACTS THAT OCCURRED IN 1973.

AS FAR AS WHETHER -- AS TO WHAT EXTEND CONGRESS WAS AWARE, THERE WERE PUBLIC STATEMENTS MADE AT THAT TIME THAT A BOMBING HALT AT THE MOMENT WOULD JEOPARDIZE A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT. THEY WERE MADE BY THE ADMINISTRATION AT THE TIME. AND I AM NOT PERSONALLY AWARE OF ANYTHING BEYOND THAT; I WASN'T INVOLVED IN THAT AT THAT TIME.

Q. MR. HABIB, IF YOU SAY, AS YOU DID EARLIER, THAT THE

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KHMER ROUGE IS DETERMINED TO GO ON MILITARILY, TO KEEP FIGHTING, WHAT GOOD WOULD \$220 MILLION DO?

A. I DIDN'T QUITE SAY THAT. WHAT I WOULD TRY TO SAY VERY CLEARLY, HOWEVER, IS THAT A PERUSAL OF THIS RECORD WOULD SHOW--AND ON THE BASIS OF THE OTHER EVIDENCE AVAILABLE TO US--THAT IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF THE WAR IN CAMBODIA, IT'S QUITE CLEAR THAT THE KHMER ROUGE, KHMER COMMUNISTS, MUST ACCEPT THAT THEY CAN NOT AND WILL NOT WIN A MILITARY VICTORY, THEY'RE NOT INTERESTED IN DISCUSSION.

THE REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR CAMBODIA IS BASED UPON A DESIRE TO GIVE THE CAMBODIANS THE MEANS TO DEFEND THEMSELVES--NOT BECAUSE THE GOVERNMENT OF THE KHMER REPUBLIC SEEKS A MILITARY VICTORY. IT'S BECAUSE THE GOVERNMENT OF THE KHMER REPUBLIC HAS MADE APPARENT, AGAIN AND AGAIN, THAT IT IS PREPARED TO ACCEPT A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT. WITHOUT ANY PRE-CONDITIONS THEY ARE PREPARED TO A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT.

NOW, IN ORDER TO GET TO THE STAGE OF DISCUSSION, YOU CAN NOT HAVE A SITUATION IN WHICH A GOVERNMENT'S POSITION IS ENTIRELY PRECARIOUS. IT WILL BE ENTIRELY PRECARIOUS

IF THEY DON'T HAVE THE MEANS TO DEFEND THEMSELVES. THE ADDITIONAL SUPPORT THAT IS ASKED FOR THEM IS NOT DESIGNED TO LEAD TO THE CREATION OF A SITUATION IN WHICH THEY CAN ACHIEVE A MILITARY VICTORY. THAT IS NOT THE OBJECTIVE OF THE KHMER GOVERNMENT, AND IT IS NOT THE OBJECTIVE OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT.

OUR OBJECTIVE HAS BEEN CLEARLY STATED BY THE PRESIDENT. IT'S A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT, A PEACEFUL COMPROMISE SETTLEMENT. IT IS THE SAME OBJECTIVE THAT IS STATED BY THE GOVERNMENT IN PHNOM PENH.

Q. THERE SEEMS TO BE SOME OPINION THAT THE ACTION OF THE HOUSE YESTERDAY WHICH DELAYED THE FINAL APPROVAL OF THIS MONEY MIGHT HAVE PUT IT BEYOND THE DEADLINE OF APRIL 1ST THOUGH. WHAT'S YOUR REACTION TO THAT?

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A. NO.

Q. DO YOU THINK THAT'S TRUE?

A. NO. I DON'T THINK THAT IS TRUE. NOW, I THINK THE CONGRESS IS DOING WHAT IT SHOULD DO. IT IS SERIOUSLY

CONSIDERING THE REQUESTED SUBMITTED TO IT BY THE PRESIDENT. IT IS SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING IT NOT ONLY IN THE HOUSE AND IN THAT PARTICULAR COMMITTEE BUT IT IS SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING IT IN BOTH HOUSES. IT IS SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING IT BY VIRTUE OF A CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION THAT WENT TO CAMBODIA TO EXAMINE THE SITUATION, TO TALK TO THE PEOPLE ON THE GROUND.

NO. I WOULD SAY THAT CONGRESS IS MOVING WITH ALL DELIBERATE SPEED AND THAT THEY ARE CONSIDERING THE MATTER IN A THOROUGH FASHION--AND I WOULD HOPE, FROM OUR STANDPOINT, THAT THEY WOULD END IN A POSITIVE DECISION.

Q. ONE LAST QUESTION--FROM ME, AT LEAST. IS THERE ANY OTHER?

IS THE SURVIVAL OF THE LON NOL GOVERNMENT OF VITAL NATIONAL INTEREST TO THE UNITED STATES--ABSOLUTELY VITAL TO THE NATIONAL INTEREST OF THE UNITED STATES?

A. NOBODY IS TALKING ABOUT THE SURVIVAL OF THIS OR THAT OR THE OTHER. WHAT PEOPLE ARE TALKING ABOUT, AND WHAT THE POSITION OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN ALL ALONG, IS THAT THERE SHOULD BE IN CAMBODIA A PEACEFUL COMPROMISE SETTLEMENT WHICH ENDS THE WAR.

NOW, EXACTLY HOW, WHAT THE CONDITIONS FOR THAT ARE-- THE FIRST INSTANCE WOULD BE THE ACCEPTANCE BY THE OTHER SIDE, BY THE KHMER COMMUNISTS, OF THE GENERAL THESIS WHICH IS ALREADY ACCEPTED BY THE KHMER NATIONALISTS IN PHNOM PENH. THE GENERAL THESIS SHOULD BE ACCEPTED THAT THE PURSUIT OF OBJECTIVES BY THE USE OF FORCE IS NOT WARRANTED AND IS NOT NECESSARY.

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Q. WELL, DOES THAT MEAN THAT WE WOULD SETTLE FOR A LAOTIAN KIND OF COALITION?

A. WELL IT'S NOT WHAT WE WOULD SETTLE FOR IT'S WHAT THEY WOULD SETTLE FOR.

Q. WELL, THE ARRANGEMENT WOULD--

A. THAT WOULD HAVE TO COME OUT OF NEGOTIATIONS. I DON'T THINK YOU AND I COULD NEGOTIATE IT HERE. THERE'S NO POINT IN OUR NEGOTIATING IT. IF THERE WERE, I'D BE VERY HAPPY TO DO IT.

WELL, THE POINT IS THAT THERE HAS TO BE THE KIND OF

DISCUSSION THAT LEADS ONE TO DEAL WITH THE ISSUES THAT
ARE INVOLVED AND LEAVES THE PARTIES CONCERNED TO AN
ACCEPTABLE COMPROMISE SETTLEMENT. THAT'S ALL THAT'S
BEING ASKED.

MR. FUNSETH: THANK YOU, MR. SECRETARY
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